

## House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

### House Approves Bill to Provide Access to Free and Reduced Cost Prescription Drugs



#### *Legislation Cosponsored By Rep. Bielawa*

Hartford, CT- On Wednesday, June 1, The House of Representatives unanimously approved legislation cosponsored by State Rep. Hank Bielawa, R-2nd, that would establish a Pharmacy Outreach Program to inform underinsured or uninsured patients of help that may be available to them. House Bill 6854 would establish a program in order to assist residents in obtaining reduced cost or no cost prescription medications or nonprescription medications from participating manufacturers, and educating them about health care issues relating to their medications. The bill now goes to the State Senate for consideration.

The legislation would create a single point of access for citizens by maintaining a state-wide toll free telephone number to counsel and advise eligible persons on how to access more than 275 public and private patient assistance programs, including more than 150 programs offered by pharmaceutical companies.

“Often times we hear that people are eligible for certain prescription assistance programs but don’t participate because they are unaware of them,” said Rep. Bielawa. “A centralized system will help people learn what programs provide more affordable prescription medications. I’m pleased this legislation was overwhelmingly supported by my colleagues.”

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) has long-standing patient assistance programs that have been available through an interactive web site ([www.HelpingPatients.org](http://www.HelpingPatients.org)) that provides a comprehensive one-stop link to thousands of medicines offered through hundreds of patient assistance programs.

An example of current programs that would be accessed under the legislation are the Together Rx™ and Together Rx Access, which offer real savings on more than 430 FDA-approved brand-name prescriptions. The programs are available to individuals who lack public or private prescription drug coverage.

The Together Rx™ and Together Rx Access participants may receive savings of approximately 20 percent to 40 percent, and in some cases more, on prescriptions for

brand-name medicines. The companies are: Abbott, AstraZeneca, Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, GlaxoSmithKline, Janssen, members of the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies, Novartis, Ortho-McNeil, sanofi-aventis Group, Pfizer, and Takeda and Tap.